



# CATAWBA COUNTY

Public Health

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## Immunizations Through The Years

The Catawba County Public Health is joining the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in recognizing August as National Immunization Awareness Month. The goal of the observance is to increase awareness about immunizations for people of all ages (children, adults, and the elderly). Consequently the theme for this year's campaign is **"Immunizations Through the Years."**

Immunizations has been cited as one of the ten great public health achievements of the 20th century. National immunization efforts have reduced the occurrence of many vaccine preventable diseases by more than 99% when compared with the history of the pre-vaccine period. However, the viruses and bacteria that caused once common diseases such as measles, polio, and tetanus still exist in the world. According to the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control, vaccine preventable diseases cause over a million deaths worldwide each year.

"Although vaccine-preventable disease levels are at or near record lows in the U.S., we cannot take high immunization coverage levels for granted," said Doug Urland, Catawba County Public Health Director. "Getting immunized is a lifelong, life-protecting community effort for the public. Being aware of and receiving the vaccines that are recommended for infants, children, adolescents, adults, and seniors is critical to protecting ourselves and our communities from disease."

Even though most infants and toddlers have received all recommended vaccines by age 2, many under-immunized children remain, leaving the potential for outbreaks of disease. Many adolescents and adults are under-immunized as well, missing opportunities to protect themselves against diseases such as Hepatitis B, influenza, and pneumococcal disease.

Debbie Easton, Catawba County Public Health Charge Nurse for Immunizations says, "Vaccines are among the most successful and cost effective public health efforts available for preventing disease and death. In the year 2006, 10,467 vaccines were given at Catawba County Public Health and 3,840 of those were administered to children between the ages of 0-18."

August is the ideal time to remind family, friends, co-workers and those in the community to stay up to date on their vaccines. Parents are enrolling their children in school, students are entering college, health care workers and the public are preparing for the upcoming flu season and people may have foreign travel plans.

Most of these vaccines may be obtained at Catawba County Public Health at 3070 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue Drive SE in Hickory, off Fairgrove Church Road behind Catawba Valley Medical Center. You may also check with your physician or college of choice for specific requirements on vaccinations. You may make an appointment at Catawba County Public Health Monday - Friday by calling 828-695-5881.

For more information call Catawba County Public Health at 828-695-5800 or visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

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